



SUPPORTING GROWTH THROUGH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

A 2018 Municipal Election Platform

Greater Sudbury
Chamber of
Commerce
sudburychamber.ca



Chambre de
commerce
du Grand Sudbury

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

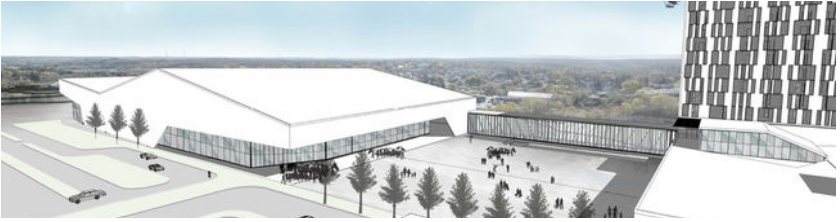
The upcoming municipal election provides a key opportunity for Greater Sudbury's voters to set the direction for our municipality for the next four years and ensure that our community remains an attractive place to live, work and play by prioritizing economic development.

In order to help voters set that direction, the Greater Sudbury Chamber of Commerce is releasing Supporting Growth Through Economic Development: A 2018 Municipal Election Platform. This platform is part of the chamber's ongoing mission to enhance our community's economic prosperity and quality of life, and is a blueprint for building a thriving community. It is our hope that all municipal candidates will adopt this platform, prioritize the actions identified in this document, and work toward the successful development of our shared prosperity.

In Supporting Growth Through Economic Development, we have identified five areas of opportunity for Greater Sudbury. They are:

- The Kingsway Entertainment District and The Junction;
- Planning our infrastructure investments;
- Supporting business at Tom Davies Square;
- Building a skilled workforce; and
- Pro-actively managing our water systems.

For each of these priorities we have identified a number of key actions that the Mayor and Council can undertake during the coming term. We are confident that if they commit to these actions and execute them diligently, they will be supporting the city's fiscal well-being, efficiency in municipal services and operations, quality of life, and economic prosperity.



Greater Sudbury is in need of strategic investment to spur economic growth, create new jobs, and enhance its quality of life. To that end, City Council has approved the construction of a new events centre/arena on the Kingsway, and is working through a process for the possible development of a conference/performance centre, and a library/art gallery, the latter two projects being collectively known as The Junction. As the voice of business, the Greater Sudbury Chamber of Commerce supports investments in the Kingsway Entertainment District (KED) and The Junction provided the City clearly demonstrates the financial implications of the projects and sets out a framework for how these projects will be paid off over time. The Greater Sudbury Chamber of Commerce recommends that the Mayor and Council:

- Prioritize fiscal responsibility by way of developing sound and transparent financial and operating plans to pay for the capital costs associated with the KED and The Junction;
- Include in the financial plans for the KED and The Junction the impact the investments will have on the city's finances and on municipal property tax rates;
- Ensure that work on the development of the KED and The Junction proceed expeditiously to realize their economic potential as soon as possible; and
- Communicate timely, public updates on the progress of the KED and The Junction projects throughout their development.

THE KINGSWAY ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT AND THE JUNCTION



PLANNING OUR INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS

Infrastructure development and renewal are necessary for the well-being of our community, but they also have a critical impact on business operations. Construction can have dramatic impacts on customer traffic and the ability of businesses to service their clients. Reducing this burden should be a top priority for the city when planning construction work. While continuing to make necessary investments in municipal infrastructure, the city should adopt a strategic and comprehensive approach to infrastructure development and renewal in order to reduce the impact on businesses to a minimum. The Greater Sudbury Chamber of Commerce recommends that the Mayor and Council:

- Develop and implement a construction communications strategy that will ensure businesses are advised as early as possible in advance of, and throughout the process of, scheduled construction;
- Use the asset management plan to develop an infrastructure renewal schedule in order to provide businesses with as much advance notice as possible. This will allow businesses to take their own steps to minimize the impacts of construction work;
- Coordinate the renewal of infrastructure systems (e.g. renewing both water/wastewater infrastructure, expanded broadband, and road infrastructure at the same time). This will reduce the number of disruptions and the total amount of time that businesses are impacted; and
- Extend the hours during the summer months during which construction crews may operate so that disruption timelines are as short as possible. These extended hours can be included as part of the RFP process.

The cumulative regulatory burden at all levels of government continues to challenge businesses in Greater Sudbury. Addressing this burden at the municipal level will be key to increasing our community's competitiveness and attracting investment. By prioritizing policies that will reduce the regulatory burden and will keep Greater Sudbury competitive, Council can support economic growth and prosperity. The Greater Sudbury Chamber of Commerce recommends that the Mayor and Council:

- Instruct staff to include economic growth and competitiveness as a criterion when evaluating new or existing regulations, bylaws, and policies;
- Support the development of a one-window service to help developers navigate the municipal regulatory process;
- Direct municipal senior staff to foster a proactive, solutions-oriented culture at city hall, so that city staff are able to use their judgment and discretion to support businesses; and
- Make it a priority to develop the Land and Property Management System to ensure that city staff can work efficiently, permitting times are reduced, and the overall costs to businesses are constrained.



BUILDING A SKILLED WORKFORCE



Greater Sudbury's businesses continue to cite difficulty attracting and retaining skilled labour as one of their biggest barriers to growth. The city should introduce practices to attract skilled labour to Greater Sudbury and make our community a more attractive place to live, work, and play. Such practices should be implemented in partnership with other levels of government and other municipalities across Northern Ontario. To grow our city's labour force, the Greater Sudbury Chamber of Commerce recommends that the Mayor and Council:

- Continue to advocate for the implementation of a regional immigration program in Northern Ontario, in partnership with local MPs and MPPs and other northern municipalities; and
- Support efforts to create a job portal to aggregate and advertise job opportunities available in Greater Sudbury. This will help promote Greater Sudbury as an attractive place to look for work.

The Water/Wastewater Masterplan (WWMP) will become a crucial feature of the city's finances over the next 25 years, with planned expenditures totaling more than \$1.3B by 2041. Water infrastructure is also a critical component in ensuring that Greater Sudbury is an attractive place to live, work, and play. Expenditures of this magnitude and importance demand thoughtful and transparent planning from the city. The Greater Sudbury Chamber of Commerce recommends that the Mayor and Council:

- Invite public scrutiny and review of the WWMP by pursuing well-communicated and ongoing public consultations. This will help ensure the plan and its associated costs are understood and meet the needs of both business and homeowners;
- Ensure that further development of the WWMP carefully considers and incorporates development planning and demand side management measures (e.g. water conservation) as tools to forego or postpone the need for major capital expenditures;
- Prioritize fiscal responsibility by way of ensuring the WWMP's financial plan is transparent and clearly lays out how the plan will be financed and what impacts it will have on the city's fiscal health. Given the scope and timeline of WWMP expenditures, this is a key opportunity to ensure taxpayer dollars are well spent for decades to come; and
- Encourage the use of innovative practices and technologies to develop a more efficient and responsive water/wastewater system. This should include things like smart meters, which would allow the city to detect and address leaks more quickly.



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